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1901





THE SOUL-AT-ARMS

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

Smith, Robinson ✓

JAMES ROBINSON SMITH
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We are like men on guard.

PLATO

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HEZLITT & SEAWARD

CAMBRIDGEPORT, MASS.

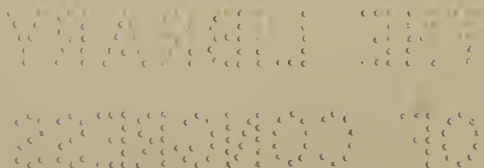
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BY
JAMES ROBINSON SMITH



TO MY LOVE

I

HER days had been of tranquil peace, I thought,
 So happy in its beauty was her face ;
 As if our God had sent her in his grace
 To bring release to minds of men distraught.
 But now I see in her own soul were wrought
 The suffering changes that have led to bliss,
 And in the very rapture of her kiss
 I hear the after-sigh of times she fought.
 The while she seemed a delegated life,
 I looked in glad astonishment above,
 As when the sun awakens field and town.
 But now she breathes a being of the strife,
 I bow my head in gathered peace and love,
 Like weary peasants when the sun goes down.

II

'ZEUS, Father, save from out the clouded air
 The sons of Greece, and make the heavens, I pray,
 All fresh and clear. Their hope restore ; and slay
 Them in the light, if so thy will declare.'
 Thus Ajax spake, and Zeus upheld his prayer.
 The sun shone forth and scattered far away
 The mist, and drove the clouds beyond the day.
 There on the plain the battle was laid bare.
 I stand in darkness and in mist that rose
 From the imagined ills which make my night.
 Nor can I see where lies the open fight,
 Where face to face the warrior meets his foes
 And to his death as to his bridal goes.
 If thy will, Father, slay me in the light.

III

HE wrote the legend of a fairer earth
That I might read ;
He told the secret of our human worth ;
I did not heed.

His straight way led him to the Sun of suns
And spreading clouds —
Spiritually impassioned orisons
From swirling crowds.

I kneel and quake before the wind that blows
From off that land ;
He holds the sweet forgiveness of a rose
Within his hand.

IV

As home-returning soldiers build a mound
Of gleaming trophies, won from ancient foe,
And round it children brighten in the glow
Of the strange playthings by their fathers found ; —
At eve the victors march to open ground
Before the walls for their return laid low.
All night they hymn the moon-curbed sea, and
know
Communicated thankfulness profound ; —
E'en so the soul-at-arms by aspiration
Led and upheld in high endeavor, brings
The glorious tokens gained in consummation
Of self-effacing dreams, and grandly sings
Its never-ending strains of adoration
Voiced to the God-controllèd surge of things.

O MAHDIST, when thou held'st at Omdurman
The sacred standard of thy God on high,
The faith that shone in thy fanatic eye
Secured to immortality thy clan.
With that defiant deed of thine began
The unillumined night of Afric sky
To blaze with stars ; and o'er the hopes that lie
In men a quickening sense of glory ran.
Unarmored, standing in his comrades' gore,
As deaf as they to whistling bullets' hum,
As grandly dead to booming cannons' roar :
One more is added to the countless sum
Of all the great ones that have gone before,
And all the greater that are yet to come.

VI

HEROIC are the times in which we dwell.
Look everywhere and see the faces bright
With burning ardor of an inner light,
And strong wills humbled under stronger spell.
While unknown thousands live who never quell
Their sense of something better ; whose delight
Is duty made desire ; whose faith gives sight
Of heaven to other men just come from hell.
When some small incident reveals the grand
We live in — all its far sublimity —
I seem a member of that remnant band
Of marching Greeks, who, glimpsing suddenly
Where spreads the broad expanse that waves their
land,
Shouted in wild delirium, ' The sea, the sea.'

VII

THE heavens laugh about the sun,
The shores receive with shouts the sea ;
The fields are glad with brooks that run,
And thou, my love, rejoicest me.

VIII

THE ages dreamed of perfect brotherhood,
And one short century has proved it true.
The ages never dreamed nor understood
The love immutable I have for you.

IX

O SPIRIT floating through eternity,
O Love, to whom ascend the loves of time,
Again I hear in deep humility
Thy long exerted harmony sublime.

X

THIS human life the sea I sail,
And faith in men the speeding wind.
My friends the blessed ships I hail,
And God the port we all would find.

XI — TO WORDSWORTH

VOICER of harmonies before unknown,
Believer in humanity, O sage,
O poet, I love to wander o'er the page
Which thou with never-dying seed hast sown.
For thoughts flower there that lead me to a throne
Of happiness, so clearly they presage
What God has given as our heritage,
And what by effort we can make our own.
And O to battle with the wakened throng
Of happy warriors, whose voices roll
Some fragment of the burden of thy song
Heavenward! till life no longer can control
The vision and the glory that belong
To human crises of the immortal soul.

XII

O THOU who led'st me through the wilderness
Of doubt, through faith in thee thy lover goes
On to the promised land, where deeply flows
The river of belief, with streams that bless.
And now at sunrise long before the stress
Of day sets in, a courage, a repose,
Renew themselves as surely as a rose
Flowers from morning dews of happiness.
And when at night I pray that all my dreams
Shall be of thee, I pass in ecstasy
Of visionary thought to where there seems
The thrilled communion of a trinity
Whose light through melting clouds of longing
beams :
Thy soul, and my desire, and Deity.

XIII

HIS face is like a holy narrative
Illuminated in some monk's lone cell.
But colors could not paint, nor letters spell,
The living story that his features give.
The eyes are silently contemplative
Of some new world of thought. The brow doth tell
The building of a firmament where dwell
Those higher sympathies by which we live.
Here has the faith which never finds its way
To words its dumb expression, and the goal
That vanishes or changes day by day
Is imaged here inviolate. The whole
Is marked with lines and shadows that portray
The sacred victories of mind and soul.

XIV — TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

DEAR Dorothy, how many hast thou taught
To know a quietude mid sufferings —
That utter tenderness which sorrow brings,
Without the turmoil of a mind distraught.
And friends through thee, we bless the hand that
wrought,
That husbanded these daily offerings :
Thy home-felt sympathy with lonely things —
The still communion with thy dearest thought.
And always shall we love thy simple lore
Of sweetness ; love upon the hills to feast
Our souls with beauty. Maiden, evermore
Thy name is linked to nature's highest priest.
How happy in his heaven must he be,
Knowing like immortality with thee.

Too much I dwell with sadness ; by degrees
 The great, blue heavens have darkened with the
 pain

And death of everything that lives ; the rain
 Sorrowing and the burdened moan of seas.

O let me purge myself of such disease,

And wed my hardships to a nobler strain.

I 'll fight with heroes on the Trojan plain,

Or listen, purified, to Socrates.

Or watch where Satan's majesties are met

In ruin, battalion on battalion hurled ;

While the far host that stood for heaven, have set

The stars and sleep in quiet with banners furled.

For one courageous hour I shall forget

The silent suffering of the modern world.

XVI— TO DANTE

THY harmonies have not yet held mine ear.

Thy truth has still its glory to create.

And yet thou art, I think, of all the great,

He whom at death I chiefly shall revere.

For they who breathe thy holy atmosphere,

Come flushed with adoration, and I wait

In growing wonderment without the gate,

As shepherds watch the shadowed sun and fear.

And when I come, as soon I shall, to stand

Within the minster's soaring majesty,

Vouchsafe I need not shield my face with hand

Uplifted lest thy light discover me ;

But let my spirit suddenly be fanned

In sweet translation to thy purity.

XVII — THE SOUL-AT-ARMS

' WHY ask to know the elemental throes
That gave me birth, or vainly hope to trace,
Beyond the gulf of death, the paths that scale
Those undetermined heights of majesty
And power which rise to bound the great un-
known?

Enough that here upon this humble earth
Are moments of estatic holiness
For those who heed the everlasting voice
Within. This world doth move to grander strains
Than thou hast ear for. Greater turbulence
Breaks round the throne of God than that which
shook

Creation. Exultations from life's heights
Meet there embittered cryings from the depths.
Through storm and wind, his sentinels, through
wind

And storm we stand on guard, his souls-at-arms.
And though we fall the battle will be won.
But there we fight in unison, while here
No other armor serves one save his own.
But even as when the mind attempts to grasp
The early glory of the morning heavens
Whose white magnificence of clouds is spread
Before the coming of the kingly sun,
When now, above the hills, a little cloud
Of gold sails into being, then the heart
Of him who waits rejoices with the sky :
So separate and blest, so infinite
In value is the individual soul.
To thee, my friend, within whose templed walls
I dwell, to thee I plead, to thee alone.

O let me be a spirit militant
And rout the cowardice of selfish fears.
As when a lover sleeps and wakes to find
The image of his maiden on his brain,
And tries to dream her o'er again, but soon
Is swept with longing for her living self :
So will the passive thing which now I am
Be clad in loving raiment of desire.
Receive me, be possessed of me, and words
Will reach thy lips with nobler meaning, thoughts
Which delegated angels put to sleep
In Eden's paradise, will wake and sing,
And I shall gird thee with the strength of joy.'

XVIII

STRANGERS, we met upon a table-land
Of sympathy and found our faiths akin.
As friends, we stood upon a wonder-strand,
And watched the mighty tide of love roll in.

XIX

IN youth he trod a shepherd's path,
And had a shepherd's careless thought.
To-day he 's under God's stern wrath,
And every step with pain is fraught.

XX

THE gentle waves fall golden to our gaze.
Of all the peaceful heavens the moon rides lord.
How long, how long, beloved, shall we raise
Our hearts in utter thankfulness to God.

XXI

THE sun-god starts exultant for the race,
The laughing rivers cheer the swollen sea.
All nature speaks the gladness of thy face ;
Full tides and early dawns I love, and thee.

XXII

THE streets were angry on that starless night
With people hungry for their daily bread.
I stood confounded, till, above my head,
A pale-lit window drew me to its height.
A man was bending near a candle-light,
And when I asked him what he did, he said,
' Beside my wish for eating and my bed,
I make me learn a little English right.'
The crowd stood cursing its inhuman fate,
Or sat contented in its misery,
While he, as poor as they and starving, late
And early steers his chosen destiny.
We are what we set out for, and the great
And blest of old are with us as we try.

XXIII — EPITHALAMIUM

FORBID, O God, that on our wedding-day
The central perils of our lives should cease ;
But let their vital influence increase,
And leave us bolder for their mastered sway.
The rude encounters of the larger fray
Are strong to give imprisoned wills release.
The thrill of fighting be our perfect peace.
The hardest ever is the holiest way.
The time is tranquil as a brooding dove,
But love's lone bark has life's loud waves to ride,
And storms may gather in the blue above.
With rapture may we mount the angry tide,
And hail our ills as lovers greet their love,
Though sorrow be thy bridegroom, pain my bride.

XXIV

WHITE shield and golden helm of olden knight
 Are happy minds become and hearts made pure.
 By faith and love we keep our homes secure.
 With hope the armor of our souls is bright.
 Attendant glories of the former fight
 Are gone, but we have hardships to endure
 As beautiful as theirs, and are, though poor,
 As rich in recognition of the right
 And priceless things of which no human stealth
 Can rob us. Ours the sweet solemnity
 Of night and day, and evening, morning health ;
 The hushed cathedral's dim immensity
 Wherein to dream our dreams ; and all the wealth
 And inspiration of our poverty.

XXV

A SOUL-CHILD came with me when I was born,
 And keeps unseen attendance at my side.
 He says, when noble things are left untried,
 ' Think, brother, of our father, he will mourn.'
 Or if by natural indignation torn,
 I undertake to hedge myself with pride
 From others' censures, clearly doth he chide,
 ' O pity, that one's faith should turn to scorn.'
 But when I ask that he shall take the lead,
 I hear, ' Mine but the prompting, thine the choice.'
 He makes me happy in the direst need,
 And strangely sober where I might rejoice.
 And I might think that he were Christ indeed,
 So gently loving is his sacred voice.

XXVI—ODE TO THE CONSCIENCE

JUST arbiter between the right and wrong,
The things that make a god divine belong
 To thy true fame ;
But some, the slaves of too great freedom, jeer
And some, irresolution's victims, fear
 To grant thy claim,
 But I may name
Thee ever holiest mid the angel throng.

Thou drivest duty, will and bravery
With many noble prophecies on high
 To keep thy law ;
And when, athirst for time, they downward dash,
They settle firm beneath thy cutting lash
 Inspired with awe,
 And forward draw
The chariot soul to immortality.

Thy rule of righteousness we know and trust,
For its impassioned temperance is just
 To each man's plea.
We steel our weapons in thy tempering fire
And love to wage the wars against desire,
 For thy decree
 Will steadfast be
When faithless creeds fall fainting in the dust.

O God of faith, O Conscience of us all,
By this thy flame in every hut and hall

 We live and die.

From our scant light we call those ages dark
That humbly handed on the precious spark

 In purity,

 And built on high

The large cathedrals, buttressed at thy call.

O watchful guardian of the thoughtless boy,
O stern commander of the man! destroy

 Our sense of fear.

Bestow upon thy chastened children blind
Undeviating rectitude of mind,

 That we may rear

 And hold more dear

Those high resolves that lead us on to joy.

XXVII

LET my devotion be
Calm as a child asleep,
Pure as the heavens, deep
As the unchanging sea.

XXVIII

A SIMPLE faith in Jesus Christ and God ;
A home of love to keep us from the wind ;
A chosen work that is its own reward ;
A little leisure and a quiet mind.

XXIX

THE stars that spread their glory on the floor
Of heaven have followed on a perfect day ;
And yet, beneath the gladness, more and more
I look upon the patient earth and pray.

XXX

THE outstretched heavens bless the lowly earth,
The smiling earth adores the heavens above.
They look the beauty of their common birth :
The world was born in tenderness and love.

XXXI

HUMILITY is not subservience
 To unrelated powers beyond recourse ;
 Nor weak denial of the actual force
 Abiding in our human elements.
 'T is being overburdened with a sense
 Of utter consecration to a course
 Of high ambitions, whose unfailing source
 Is God's will working in the world's defence.
 When faithful tidings of man's greatness, brought
 O'er the deep sea of contemplation, shed
 New glories round us, then the heart is taught
 That only by his Spirit we are fed —
 The gleam, the fervor, and the glowing thought.
 Worlds move in trembling brilliance overhead.

XXXII

I SEEK no lasting splendor in the skies,
 Nor deep communion with the men of old.
 Enough true rapture would my spirit hold,
 If God on earth should build his paradise.
 For could a heaven seem fairer to our eyes
 Than this uplifted blue we now behold?
 Or could a world more grandly be unrolled
 Than this our home whose beauty never dies?
 And if the soul were in the body free,
 How spiritual humanity would seem.
 Each face of all the sacred company
 With angel-like beatitude would beam.
 And we should pass each other silently,
 In holy recognition of our dream.

XXXIII

I HOLD that books and nature are commands
 To better living ; yet almost as naught
 Before the process of creative thought,
 Or daily passion of God's high demands.
 But from the height where Plato ever stands
 Are visions of our purer nature caught,
 And o'er the wide philosophy he taught,
 A whole, enduring heaven of truth expands.
 And oft within the love-compelling face
 Of evening's beatific clouds, it seems
 That the Eternal has abiding-place,
 Such light from out the great high heaven streams.
 Before that glorious altar, by its grace,
 Comes the confession of men's holiest dreams.

XXXIV

Two ever-present forces shape the will,
 And keep it to a purpose low or high.
 The one shows mercy to our weakest lie
 And makes our selfish passions meaner still.
 The other has a vision to fulfil
 And gives the living strength to do and die.
 And who so base that can his saint deny,
 Or who so pure that does not know his ill.
 The noble prophet whose uncovered face
 Is lit with spiritual abstraction mild,
 Has sometimes nought between him and disgrace.
 And though by every stain of guilt defiled,
 The most unworthy member of the race
 Will look with pity on his sleeping child.

XXXV

UPLIFTED from this world of time and space
 I saw God's angels round about his throne.
 The swords of Cherubim and trumpets blown
 By Seraphim made heaven of the place.
 The living faith of ages calmed the face
 Of Michael, but diviner beauty shone
 In Christ, whose sweet sublimity had known
 On earth the presence and the power of grace.
 The knowledge of their Father's love doth fill
 The sons of God with perfect peace secure,
 And in his service is their joy ; but still
 The history of their features made me sure
 That God denies them knowledge of his will —
 Each angel through himself is strong and pure.

XXXVI

WHEN God's high thunder broke around my head,
 And the dark road was shaken with his light,
 I ran and called with terror and delight,
 For the whole world seemed waking from the dead.
 Though now the sacred ecstasy has fled,
 And silent greatness holds the sky of night,
 I crave the glory of that second sight —
 To know forevermore the God I dread.
 For human thoughts though pure as living springs
 Reflect but human heavens after all ;
 And we have need of more than mortal brings
 Our consecrated spirits to enthrall :
 A heightened consciousness of greater things —
 A long illumination and a call.

XXXVII

THE land of friends is passing fair,
Enclosed with peaceful skies above
And purple mountains hung in air.
And round the outer side thereof
Are sacred intervals ; and there
It borders on the land of love.

The land of love is fairer still
And happy as a wayside stream.
Deep rivers keep their own sweet will,
And seas with golden sunsets gleam.
And lovers wind around a hill
Like saints that rise from dream to dream.

Birds musical the twilight through —
Brooks laughing loud on every hand —
Winds calling down the evening dew —
Waves breaking white along the strand —
Are voices of the dream come true :
That I have crossed the border land !

XXVIII—A BRIEF TRUCE

CHARACTERS: A Count—A Priest—A Peasant-girl

PLACE: The hill-country of Italy

TIME: The present

SCENE I — *The tower room of the Count's castle. On the walls is hung 'armoury of the invincible knights of old.' Through the open window may be seen the distant, snow-capped Apennines, and neighboring hills.*

COUNT (*alone*)

This day of idleness has fed my sin
As barren skies give nourishment to clouds.
Yet action will not dull the sting, for then
I feel the hounds of conscience drawing near,
And like a hunted stag at eve, I fall.
Sleep is a stranger whom I let not in
And tireless demons guard the door of peace.
In vain I intercede on my behalf,
Saying, 'Not I, but kindness kissed the girl.'
Too clearly stands the burning consciousness
Of sin committed by my own free will,
With knowledge that 't was wrong. A little kiss,
Which thousands give in merriment and reap
No retribution; I, in tenderness
And drink the cup of suffering to the lees,
For with the kiss I pledged my self, my soul,

That there my life should be, and there my rest.

The little ripple of unchecked desire

Beneath the wind of conscience grows a wave

That bears me to destruction — I am gone !

(Moves suddenly as if to plunge through one of the open windows but checks himself ; after a pause, he continues)

But no ! there yet remains the one resource

Of full confession to the absolving priest.

Perchance he 'll make my peace with memories.

(Exit)

SCENE II — *A vast cathedral, dim in its immensity and shadow, splendid in its magnificence of window. In the north aisle a confessional, at which the count kneels.*

COUNT

I come to tell thee, father, of my sin,

A sin which wolf-like lacerates my breast,

And I am not the Spartan to conceal.

Bound homeward from the chase one afternoon,

Twelve months ago, I met a peasant-girl

Who bent beneath the burden of her load.

I held in rein, dismounted, and asked leave

To place her heavy bundle on my horse.

She gave me thanks, and raised and held the pack

Upon the saddle, while I led the way.

We walked in silence many upland miles,

Until our roads divided on a hill.

The time was of the setting of the sun.

The mountain snows were bathed in evening light,

And stationed round about them flamed the clouds

Like great, all-shining ministers of God.

While in the lovely vale beneath us lay
The peacefulness and patience of the earth.
The silence was intensified, until
My heart melted in tears of joy that earth
Was so near heaven. I quietly kissed the girl.
She seemed to come like evening o'er my mind.
And while we watched the wondrous moon arise,
Words from my heart kept mounting to my lips
Vowing eternal pledges of my love.
And ere we parted, I had named the day
When I should make her mistress of my halls.
My mind that night was bathed in blissfulness
Of thought ; but with the morn I seemed undone.
I knew that I should lose all faith in self
And God, if that one pledge stood broken. Yet
How could I shame my lineage, kill my pride.
I have not seen nor tried to see her since.
But that first kiss is with me burning still.
My conscience haunts me like a baleful dream,
Or like a vulture fastens on my brain.
Each moment is the tapping of a drill
That undermines my character at last.
Shrieve me, O shrieve me, father, of that sin.
A mediator, plead for me in prayer.

PRIEST (*after a pause*)

It is not to be dreamed of that the soul
Should purge itself by vacant prayers to Heaven ;
Should ever mirror God within its depths
While o'er its surface hangs a mist of sin.
Before thou seekest pardon of thy God,
Make reparation to the girl thou 'st wronged.

Heaven and the world hate sin. The God and
law

Of things demand thou straightway wed the child.
Receive her promise, lead her here, then home.

The soul of man is beautiful by deeds

Or else in casual aspiration dies

Away. Think'st thou that they who built on
high

These walls of aspiration, this devout

Magnificence of window, passed their lives

In theoretic dreaming all the day?

Ah no! they actualized their praise and prayer

In stone. So shall with us a living faith,

The deep religion of our daily lives,

And fruitful deeds, immortalize our dreams.

There yet are peaks far higher than thou seest

From whence this mountain thou art now to
climb

Will seem a little valley lost to view.

I may not tell the courage of thy days,

And long, successive nights of dreamless sleep.

Be comforted, my son; no longer think

That God inhabits regions bright in Heaven,

And evil holds a reign secure in hell.

But look within thy knowing heart and see

The Deity and devil side by side.

Sin has no other origin but there,

And thence alone the penitent must come.

For there are all thy wars and terms of peace —

Unqualified surrender to the soul.

SCENE III — *On the highway. The sun is rising and comes like a lover o'er the morning hills, bringing warmth and gladness to the lovèd earth.*

COUNT (*alone*)

My mind is made, but O, that 't were my mind
And not the priest's! I left too much to him.
Not mine the glory of a thing resolved,
Nor after-triumph of the thing attained. (*a pause*)
Ah! here she comes, much changed, and yet the
same.

(The girl enters on her way to her work in the fields)

Maiden, thou must remember me, thy friend —
The day we spent together and the eve.
I ask thee now to come and be my bride,
To live with me in the high halls, and love
Our children more, far more, than thou canst me.

GIRL

Ah! sir, I do remember thee, the day
We spent together and the guilty thing
Thou dost not name. In purest innocence
Of soul I thought thou loved'st me in that kiss.
How often since that time, when at my work,
I've felt thee drawing near to take me home.
And in my evening dreams on gentle nights
I heard thee calling from the hills of sleep.
At lone dawns on that hillside whence we viewed

The sun's calm setting, I have stood and prayed.
'T was then I saw that thou wouldst never come,
Till thought would follow after thought in tears.
But in the quiet confession of my heart
I knew the feeling and the sense of sin.
To God I kneeled. Of Christ I pardon asked.
The mornings broke on sorrow and on care,
And sun and mountain-winds have wasted me,
Till the weak body knows that it will die
And be no more. I long to sow and reap
In other fields, where, working, I shall hear
New harmonies, and looking up shall see
Bright saints in rapture passing toward the dawn;
And others standing motionless, whose thoughts,
Late found in heaven, do make them pause and
wonder,
Till o'er the gulph between the vision seen
And God they are transported, and become
Their sacred selves. I think that one may see
Only the beauty of the earth from there :
Its upright souls and pure, its vales and hills.
I wonder if the stars are seen, the stars
Our watchful guardians —

COUNT (*interrupting*)

Maiden, come with me.
God will be with us only if thou come.

GIRL (*after a pause*)

I fear this is obedience to thy church,
Or conscience ; not the flowering of thy heart

In love. Thou canst not love the poor, weak thing
I am, too near to death to be thy bride.

Oh! sir, be kind at heart and true in mind.

And try to love some day for love of Love,
To feel the kiss of righteousness and peace.

Farewell. Ever, a soldier, fight and pray;

For Christ's sake, in acknowledgment of Him

Whose influence breathes quiet upon the world.

(Exit girl. Count remains, with head bowed)

XXXIX

HE trod the sacred highway of desire
 And looked for some far light to lead him true,
 And many crimson dawnings bathed the blue
 Which seemed his noblest being to inspire.
 But as the sun, though set, will gild a spire
 To glory, so a world beyond his view
 Now touched his heart to faith, and with a new,
 More universal love he journeys higher.
 The sacred highway of his youth he leaves,
 The smiles and greetings of the crowd are gone ;
 But high and heavenly-minded he achieves
 In faithfulness his guerdon and a crown.
 Bounteous are the blessings he receives,
 Serene and deep the faith that leads him on.

XL

WHEN on his dreams the final sanctions fall
 And thousands their thanksgiving voices raise,
 He shrinks from looking at their blinding praise :
 The meed is nothing for the work was all.
 And though the task had been as bitter gall,
 Had joined in sorrow all his nights and days,
 He seeks effacement from their idle gaze,
 Or hears anew some faith-compelling call.
 Of that pure time, O true prefigurement,
 When dream and drama, looking up from life,
 Shall lose their human, selfish element ;
 Where evil in itself and good are rife,
 And we the actors, dreamers, shall be spent
 In wild participation of that strife.

XL I

AND in the dream I found me at the door
 Of heaven, and someone gently closed mine eyes.
 Again I opened them on Paradise.
 I never felt such central peace before.
 For Christ was there in fulness to adore,
 Since in me He made love and light arise ;
 And God, whose perfect stillness moves the skies—
 Whose face the saints behold forevermore.
 And like the mighty movement of the sea,
 The Spirit throbbed and trembled through the whole.
 And angels stood in rapture calm and free,
 Live pilgrims dreaming they are near their goal ;
 Or came like ships at evening silently
 With all their precious freight of sense and soul.

XL II

ONE beauty is the revelation wrought
 Upon the weather-beaten majesty
 Of mountains, and the heavens' purity
 Which frees us from the tyranny of thought.
 Another is the symbolism sought
 By sovereign artists in their great degree,
 That man may be reminded of that sea
 Of real perfections whence his soul is brought.
 True beauty is humility that strives
 And wins and does not know ; the laws that lend
 To baffled toil a glory that survives ;
 Two ardent, faithful angels that attend
 The morning and the evening of our lives :
 The deathless dream and love that knows no end.

XLIII

How sweet it is to lie upon the earth,
And think the world how beautiful, how dear.
How many noble qualities have birth,
How many hundred spirits flower here.

XLIV

THE clouds make beautiful the setting sun,
And stars within the river shine more fair.
But thou, my love, in soul and sight art one :
Thy life reveals thy beauty everywhere.

XLV

OUR birth is what our fathers wrought,
Our being, what we make it be ;
And yet, O God, I love the thought
That we are thine and came from Thee.

XLVI

LOVE is not passion drunken with new wine,
Nor fickle winds whose changings never cease.
Love is tranquility, the kiss of peace —
Eternally, immutably divine.

XLVII—THE SHIELD OF HUMAN NATURE

YE white-haired men, who front the setting sun
And on whose brows the light of evening dies,
Remembering when your race was still to run,
Regard with less of pity in your eyes
These youths who stablish high their distant goal
And watch the flooded heavens as they rise.
Remember when life's glory filled your soul ;
When light seemed ever breaking on the mind,
And near performance led to far control.
Is there no storm and darkness left behind
To sublimate and strengthen human powers ?
God's great dear ways of peace are unconfined.
Is David's high experience not ours ?
And when did all the prophets cease to rage ?
When died that noble-mindedness which flowers
In beauty and in truth on Plato's page ?
His service, like the shining of a star,
Is frequent, universal, knows no age.
'T was only yesterday he crossed the bar,
Who now is listening to the planets sing
And holds communion with the great afar.
And he for whom the lilacs bloom in spring,
Shall live to vindicate his time and land
And help to crown man o'er himself a king.
And things too beautiful to understand

Do arm my faith that soon another knight
Shall rise with power and goodness in his hand,
To lead o'er roads of pain the world to right.
The holy warfare of his soul shall yield
High feelings, great beliefs, and deeds of light.
God grant to all men to behold the shield
Of human nature from the side that gleams.
With rising strength of vision it is steeled
And flames immortal challenge with its beams.
Who once that light beholds, can never cease
The living dedication to his dreams —
The eternal effort toward a higher peace.

XLVIII

LET 's close our eyes and dream that we are dead,
And feel the body severed from the mind,
Which spreads its generous sails to catch the wind
And seeks an ocean where no ships have sped.
New stars unveil their beauty overhead,
The highest peaks of thought-land drop behind.
But down the sky an isle becomes defined
With flaming clouds of glory overspread.
The waves of righteousness are thundering there,
Yet through the cliffs a lovely bay expands.
We leave our little dream-boat to its care
And wakened into rapture kiss the sands ;
And rise to breathe the incense-laden air —
Behold ! the mighty Vindicator stands.

XLIX — THE MADMAN

' AM I a child to heed their words of hell
Or let them know I feel their every thrust ?
I am a child in gentleness and trust
And know that where God leads me, all is well.
The madmen built and barred this crazy cell,
And chained their savior here to let him rust.
But sooner shall the heavens fall in dust
Than they my indignation can compel.
Joy were it for me to have lived the whole,
And raised humanity above the sod ;
Another way has led me to my goal —
The rugged way, which all the saints have trod.
High in the mountain regions of the soul
Is peace, and close communion with my God.'

L

O FOR the bravery to stand !
 And know in fighting that high joy
 Which none save martyrs may command,
 And naught but Heaven can destroy.

LI

HIS better words are lonely as his ways,
 Though human friendship is his great desire.
 He dreams of olive peace through precious days,
 But finds contentment in consuming fire.

LII

I GLORY in the glory of the stars,
 And laugh with all the laughter of the stream.
 I fight the battles of the farthest wars,
 And dream, beloved, thy all-sacred dream.

LIII

THE wild sky flames the glory to believe ;
 In saintly sounds pure ravishment abides ;
 Life's lofty summits shout, ' Aspire, achieve.'
 All this in love I find, and peace besides.

L. of C.

LIV

THE sunrise like great music wakes my soul ;
 From time it wakes it to eternity.
 Exalted silence sublimates the whole.
 I keep my peace in rapt humility.

Great music like the sunrise fires my dreams.
 The round heavens rise in flames ; the air is filled
 With all God's white removed stars. It seems
 As if the world with sudden rapture thrilled.

Twice blest when I have heard great music sound
 Great harmonies, and watched the radiant sun.
 Such days I dream it out on holy ground :
 Receptive and creative I am one.

LV

No petty moods or motions of the hours
 Should tune our service to the Holy One,
 But knowledge of the battles to be won
 Should thrill and summon all our native powers.
 How high the peak of aspiration towers.
 How broad and beautiful life's rivers run.
 The moving splendors of the setting sun
 Are foretastes of the glory to be ours.
 We grow by loving holy things and true.
 They raise our peace and consecrate the song.
 This life is always larger than our view.
 The right is ever richer than the wrong.
 New blessings crown the day ; the stars renew
 Their heavenly invitation to be strong.

LVI

BLEST is the little that is mine,
 And great enough to keep me free,
 If that small, inner voice be thine,
 And the infrequent vision, Thee.

LVII

THE nations let their cannon-thunder roll
 'Gainst alien foes, on foreign sea and shore.
 But man on that old battle-ground, the soul,
 Wages the self-same conflict o'er and o'er.

LVIII

SHAKSPERE the prodigal could lavish Time
 On brief fond nothings, and remain above.
 I am a spendthrift if I keep one rime
 From throbbing with the beauty of my love.

LIX—TO THE SUNSET

O BEAUTY far beyond our striving made !
 Prophets and kings and wondering peasantry,
 How many, since the world began, have laid
 The struggle down, and turned in peace to thee.

LX — THE STARS

' MAJESTICAL protectors of the sky,
Unmoved, unwarred on, aye at rest ;
For all your light, with sympathy unblest,
Like priests too holy for humanity.'
As I spake thus, a planet made reply :
' From west to east we fly, from east to west,
We fly, we race, the savage storm to breast,
Spinning our courses through eternity.
To blend our clustred spendors in one glow,
Or in some lonely void our ardor fan ;
To work essential blessing as we go,
And sing the far fulfilment of God's plan ;
And still a high and starry peace to show,
And silent sympathy with suffering man.'

LXI — HEREDITY

To live one's dreams, not only to be dear
To the good God who loves that things come true ;
Nor merely that against the eternal blue
Life's passing clouds may beautiful appear ;
But fight, persuaded that for conquered fear
Your son will know its courage after you ;
For every tempest calmly weathered through,
The faithful stars for him will shine more clear.
God-chosen champions of those shadowy powers
That wait in silence their desired release,
We serve most deeply when we serve those hours
Whose bliss from present agony takes lease.
The seedsman Duty sows the fairest flowers,
Which bloom long after he has found his peace.

LXII

THERE is contentment in the angel choir.
 From pride of dawn to humble eve they rest
 In pure devotion to their Lord's behest,
 Be it of liberty and peace, or higher,
 Right-onward service such as saints aspire
 And heroes burn to do. Their only test
 Is faithful standing to their conscious best,
 Though the far heavens roar with heartless fire.
 They visit us, these souls of harmony,
 To tune the human by the heavenly chord ;
 And clearly sound, like shoreward waves at sea,
 The far-off music of the real reward :
 Each mortal may his better-angel be
 And live in concord with his soul and God.

LXIII

O THOU imperious Master of my mind !
 Forbid my thoughts be slaves to private good,
 Forever be their spiritual livelihood
 The dreams and dedications of mankind.
 Not that the body-soul may cease to find
 Peace preludes in the mountain-brotherhood —
 The growing splendor of the autumn wood —
 The rage and rapture of the winter wind.
 But still for man, his struggle and his star,
 My law and energy shall take their place.
 For I have read within that poor man's scar
 A message breathing blessing to the race ;
 Have seen, while he lay moaning there, a far,
 Serene sublimity pass o'er his face.

LXIV

MERE disappointment is a glorious thing.
 It draws the poison from desire. It makes
 The man at one with God's great ways. It wakes
 The soul from slumber, bidding it to wing
 The heaven of its holy dreams and sing.
 And far away in pure ideas it takes
 Its course from star to star whose music breaks
 Before their high Original and King.
 But disappointment in ourselves! To dread
 While sunsets dare their splendor; to hear cries
 From burning cities and with fear be dead;
 To live unloving, and have dreams that rise
 And set in vain, like clouded stars unread.
 How shattered then the builded temple lies.

LXV

“THE poets take fire in sacred solitude
 And unrelated happiness, and dream
 Their dreams ‘on summer eves by haunted stream.’
 Tranquillity and joy their heavenly food.”
 So thought I then, and little understood
 That only by the cross doth God redeem;
 The life-long sacrifice his mercies seem —
 The peace of others is our tragic good.
 Thank God, the truest poetry is found
 Where bread is thanked for with the grace of tears;
 Where sorrow yields to gratitude profound
 That we against hope hope, and face our fears,
 Though aching heart and jarring thoughts confound
 The ever-changing tragedy of years.

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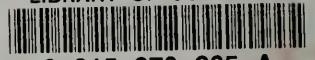
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